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A  
L E T T E R  
FROM A  
CLERGYMAN, &c.

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Price ONE SHILLING

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A  
LETTER

FROM A



GLENN, J. W.

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9

A

L E T T E R

FROM A

CLERGYMAN,

Giving his REASONS for refusing to administer  
BAPTISM in Private,  
By the PUBLIC FORM;  
As desired by a  
GENTLEMAN of his PARISH.

---

*Detestanda est non minus laicorum superbia, quam  
pastorum eis obsequentium adulatio, qui contemptâ ec-  
clesiâ proles suas volunt in domibus suis baptizari, et  
eo Baptismi aquam deferri.*

CONC. COLON.

---

L O N D O N:  
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M.DCC.LIV.

LETTER

FROM A

CLIENT

ARTIST



OF THE ARTS





A  
L E T T E R  
FROM A  
CLERGYMAN,

Giving his REASONS for refusing to  
Administer BAPTISM in PRIVATE,  
by the PUBLIC FORM, &c.

S I R,



I AM sorry, you should look on  
my Non-compliance with your  
Request, as an Instance of  
great Disrespect; and think it  
a sufficient Foundation for the Resent-  
ment you take so many Opportunities of  
discovering.

A 3

You

You alledge, that *other* Clergymen (around us) shew no kind of Scruple in christening Children at *Home*, and seem to make it a matter of Surprise that I should. I will not undertake to account for what *other* Gentlemen do, or to impeach *their* Conduct, but hope, I shall be able to produce such Reasons, and Authorites in this Letter, as will abundantly vindicate *my own*. I am very certain, that neither yourself, nor any Person whatever, can charge me with having ever done *what* I refused you. And, if this Circumstance had been admitted in the Case, and allowed its due Weight, it might have saved *you* the Trouble of making the Rupture, and *me* this Labour of endeavouring to heal it. It could not fairly be supposed, that I should *do* in the *last* Stage of Life, *what* I had *never* done before.—

And

And it is very wonderful how so *absurd* a Practice (especially as it had its *Rise* chiefly in the Times of the Rebellion, and Civil Wars in this Kingdom) should ever *obtain* among us.

THE Title of the Office of Public Baptism is, — *The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants to be used in the Church.*

AND the *Rubric* says, — The People are to be admonished, that it is most convenient, that Baptism should not be administered but upon *Sundays*, and other *Holydays*, when the most Number of People are together; as well for that the Congregation there present, may testify the Receiving of them that be newly baptised, into the Number of Christ's Church; as also because, in the Baptism of Infants, every Man present may be

put in Remembrance of his own Profession made to God in his Baptism.

AND when there are Children to be baptised, the Priest coming to the FONT, and standing there, shall say, &c.

THERE is an obvious Remark (says the Reverend and Learned Mr. Archdeacon *Sharp*) to be made on this Restriction, as to *Place*, viz. That no Minister ought to use this Public Form in a Private House, or indeed in *any* Place, except at the FONT itself, to which the Use of it is restrained. Nay, if the *Rubric* did not forbid him, the *very Office itself* would, in which he is directed to pray in these Words: *Grant, that whosoever is HERE, dedicated to thee by our Office and Ministry, may be endued with heavenly Virtues, &c.* Consider, whether these Words can consistently,  
or



or indeed without Absurdity, be used in a Parlour, or Bed-chamber, or in *any other Place*, save at the common *Baptistery*, or *Fountain of Baptism*, (as the old Offices term it), appropriated to each Parish or Congregation \*.

I WISH, Sir, you would do me the Favour to examine the Rubrics, and Office of Public Baptism a little more carefully than you have hitherto done, and then

\* A Font of Stone for *Baptism* is ordered in every Parish, (and let it *never* be forsaken) by the 81 Canon. And it is solemnly consecrated for that Purpose in the following, or such like Form. The Bishop (having laid his Hand upon it) devoutly prays, *Regard, O Lord, the Supplications of thy Servants, and grant that those Children that shall be baptized, in this Laver of the new Birth, may be sanctified, and washed with the Holy Ghost; and being delivered from thy Wrath, and received into the Ark of Christ's Church, may receive herein the Fulness of Grace, and ever remain in the Number of thy faithful and elect Children. Amen.*

See Bishop *And* Form of Consecration of a Church, in Bishop Sparrow's Collection.



you must be immediately satisfied by the *whole Tenor* of the Form, that it *ought not, cannot*, without *great Violence* done to it, be used any where else, but in the CHURCH. The Reception of a Child baptised, is to be in these Words: *We receive this Child into the Congregation of Christ's Flock, &c.* The Words, (says Dr. Comber) are a solemn Proclamation made by a sacred Herald (according to the Custom in human Creations, Investitures, and Admissions to honourable Orders), declaring the Party is now, and ought to be, reputed a *Christian*. And this ought to be spoken with a loud Voice, that all the Congregation may rejoice in beholding one more listed under JESUS CHRIST \*. And the *Form* of Reception (as any one may see, that will but read the Rubric) was so far from being intended to be used in a *Private House*

\* His Companion to the Altar, Part III. p. 197.

*House*, that in case a Child had been baptized on some urgent Occasion, and the *essential Parts* of the Sacrament administered in an House, the *Solemnities* were yet *still* to be performed in the CHURCH, and the Child brought thither to be admitted into the Congregation of Christ's Flock.

AND if, Sir, you should be disposed to know the *Use* and *Reason* of *so much* Care, as appears to have been taken in this Respect, you may be thoroughly satisfied from very unexceptionable Authority, no less than the very highly honoured Mr. Hooker's \*.

THE End which is aimed at (he tells us) in setting down the *outward Form* of all religious Actions, is the *Edification* of the Church. And we must not think  
but

\* Ecclesiastical Policy, Book I. Sect. I.

but there is some Ground of Reason even in *Nature*, whereby it cometh to pass, that no Nation under Heaven, either doth, or did suffer public Actions, which are of Weight, whether they be civil, or temporal, or else spiritual, and sacred, to pass *without* some visible Solemnity."

I COULD not but be pleased with a Paragraph in a Letter to the Public relating to the MARRIAGE-ACT, where the ingenious Author says,—Our Laws <sup>are</sup> ~~have~~ prudently mingled *Religion* with the Execution of the Marriage-Contract, joining *Prayers* with the Nuptial-Rites, and introducing a *Minister of public Worship*, as a *necessary* Agent in performing the Ceremony. And for the *same Reason* it was proper to require the Celebration of Marriage in *Places set a-part for Devotion*, as *these Circumstances all* conspire to set the Contract in a *serious Light*, and

to

to give it the Stamp of a *sacred Engagement*.

AND Baptism being a sacred Rite or Ceremony of our Saviour's *own* Appointment for the solemn admitting of Persons into the Covenant of Grace, where can it be so properly performed, as in the Place dedicated to God for Holy Uses; especially when the Church has provided a Form excellently well adapted to *such* Place, and *what* cannot *without* the utmost Impropriety be used in *any other*.

WHEN our Lord (says Bishop Beveridge) in his Infancy was brought to the *Temple*, it is said, St. *Luke* ii. 22. *They brought him thither to present him to the Lord*. Where we may observe by the Way, that this *one Place* of Scripture, *duly* considered, would be *sufficient* to persuade



persuade all Christian Parents to have their Children baptised, *not* in their *own*, but in God's *House*, that they may there be presented to the Lord, as *Christ* was, and so receive his Blessing according to the Prayers which are there made for them in God's *own House*, in *his House of Prayer*, where he himself hath promised to meet and bless them. By virtue of which Promise, the People of God in all Ages, have found their *common* and *public* Prayers more effectual \*.

\* See his great Necessity, and Advantage of public Prayer, p. 8. 'Tis most for the Interest of the Infant to be *so* baptised, that it may have the Benefit of the united Prayers of a full christian Congregation, which is much to be valued. Methinks, there should be *no need* of urging this to Parents, that have any real Love or Affection to their Children. This would incline them to desire, *that* themselves, which the Church desires of them. Remember, I beseech you, that your Children are to be but once baptised; and what is but once done, ought to be well done *in the best, and most perfect Manner.* ✠

✠ Bishop Bull's Companion for the Candidates of Holy Orders, p. 48.

BUT



BUT no Person is more worthy to be heard on this Subject, than the very Reverend Doctor *Wall*, so well known, and distinguished in the learned World, (though by *no equal* \* Preferment in the CHURCH) for his most excellent History and Defence of Infant Baptism. And I should not do Justice to myself or you, if I did not produce his Testimony. He says in his Defence, p. 408. — concerning the Abuse of administering the Sacrament of Baptism in private Houses, Bed-chambers, &c. to Children, that are well — I spoke my Sense in my Book

\* With fruitless Toil let Midnight-Scholars pore,  
And dig the Mine, while others gain the Ore.  
While *Johnson* from his *Cranbrook* ne'er shall part,  
And *Fiddes* pining, sighs with broken Heart.  
While *Grabe* in vain, t' unthankful *Britain* flies,  
And *Wall* neglected in a Corner lies;  
And poor and unrewarded *Bingham* dies. }

See the Parish-Priest in the Reverend Mr. *Samuel Wesley's* Poems.

Book on the Notes, I made on St. *Au-*  
*stin's* Account of the devout People run-  
 ning to Church with their sick Children,  
 that were in danger of Death to have  
 them speedily baptised. I have this  
 more to lay to the Consciences of those  
 my Brethren of the Clergy, that use  
 themselves to give these Bed-chamber  
 Baptisms, that they would consider both  
 the Profanation, and Indignity they bring  
 on Christ's Sacrament; and also how di-  
 rectly contrary their Practice is to the  
 Liturgy, which they are obliged in Duty,  
 and by solemn Promise to conform to.  
 The Liturgy appoints two several Offices  
 for Baptism of Infants on two several  
 Cases. One more solemn for public  
 Baptism to be used *no where* but in the  
 CHURCH, to which all Children, that  
 are in an ordinary State of Health are  
 to be brought. The other to be used in  
 Houses in case of Necessity, and not  
 else.

else. And these are very different, (not different Baptisms, but have different Circumstances) one from the other. Now for any Clergyman, that is under the Obligation of Conscience, I spoke of, to take one of these (that of public Baptism) and use it in Houses, is plainly contrary to the said Obligation. And some of the Prayers, so misapplied, are absurd and ridiculous. For Example—The Minister standing at the FONT in the CHURCH, is to say that Prayer: *Grant, that whosoever is here dedicated to thee by our Office, and Ministry, &c.* Can he think that, THAT HERE, is applicable to the Parlour or Bed-chamber: Is it not *scandalous* to apply it? or has he any Authority to *omit* or *alter* the Form? ”,

THE Profanation, and Indignity in general on this Sacrament, on Occasion of this House-Baptism, is so notorious,  
that

that I do appeal to the Experience and Conscience of all that use it, if *they themselves* be not scandalized at the indecent Circumstances, that do almost always attend it.—And can a *Minister of Christ*, take any Comfort, or can he think, that the Dignity of the Holy Office, which he is performing, is preserved in *such* a Management?

THERE is one Thing, I am loth to speak of,—That some of the Clergy are thought by some People to use this Compliance for their own sordid Gain, and for the sake of the Present which is given to the Baptiser, for submitting the Sacrament, and his own Holy Office, to ~~the~~ the Humour of some irreligious Parents.

ST. Paul speaks of some, who did keep Ale-houses with God's Word: That  
is



is his Phrase, 2 Cor. ii. 17, Καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, sell it, prostitute it, in the same Sense, as Authors use the Word Καπηλεύειν τὴν δίκην, or τὴν εἰρήνην, to *sell Justice*, or *sell a Peace*, as a κάπηλος, an Ale-house keeper sells his Ale.

GOD Almighty keep us from doing this with his Sacrament. It is more than enough; it is to a dreadful Degree too much, that Benefices, Places, Offices, Promotions in the Church are trucked. If we can keep any thing unprostituted, it should be God's Word and Sacraments. St. *James* shews the Mischief of having any Respect of Persons, rich and poor, in Concerns of Religion. It will certainly have the same Effect there, which *Solomon* says it has every where, where it is admitted. *To have Respect of Persons is not good*, (he means, it is a very

B

mis-



mischievous Thing) *for a Piece of Bread,*  
*that Man will transgress.*

I FLATTER myself, Sir, that you will pay much Deference to the Judgment of the great and good Men I have mentioned, and think better of *such* Clergymen, that *will not* be prevailed on to do Things attended with *so many bad* Consequences, I would by no means appear to be righteous over-much, or affect to be singular in my Ministry. But must I therefore slight and overlook the *important*, (yet *plain* and *easy*) Rules that are to carry us right in discharging our Office? I know not how it is possible to shut one's Eyes, and slip by them. I can hardly open my Common-Prayer Book, without immediately seeing one most striking Instruction,—That the wilful, and contemptuous Transgression and Breaking of any common Order, and  
 Discipline

Discipline is no small Offence before God; and that no Man ought to take in hand, or presume to appoint, or alter any public or common Order in Christ's Church, unless he be lawfully called, or authorized thereunto. //

I took the liberty to insert a Remark from Mr. Archdeacon *Sharp*, at the Beginning of my Letter; I shall now make a little more use of this worthy Gentleman's Authority, as he has given the fullest Testimony of his great Knowledge and Judgment in the *Ecclesiastical Laws*, by the several excellent Charges he has lately favoured the Public with. He shews through the whole Course of them all possible Candour, and gives all reasonable Latitude,—yet is very far from countenancing the Non-observance of Rubrics clearly practicable.

You will please to give me leave to lay a few Extracts from his Book before you; which, I believe, will yield you still further Satisfaction. In the first Place, I apprehend (says this eminent Ritualist) we ought to make a Difference (and it is a material one in our present Case) between those Laws and Rules, to the Observance of which we have bound ourselves by public Declarations, and express Promises; and those, which are bound upon us by Authority only, without our formal Consent, or voluntary Stipulation to observe them. For in this latter Case, where our Obligations arise merely from the Authority that prescribes, some Things may be justly and reasonably pleaded for a Dispensation for Non-observance, which yet cannot on any Pretence be alledged in the former Case, where we have by one, or more voluntary

tary Acts made ourselves Parties, and with great Solemnity tied ourselves up to the Performance of any Rite or Ceremony.

HENCE then we learn, upon how different a Footing our Rubric, to which we have bound ourselves by express Consent and Promise, is from all other Ecclesiastical Laws, where our personal Engagement is out of Question. For without considering the Rubric as Statute, and as such only, upon the level with several other subsequent Acts of Parliament relating to our occasional Ministrations we are under this peculiar Circumstance of Obligation to observe it; that we have by our Subscriptions at both Ordinations, by one of our Vows at the Altar for Order of Priesthood, by our Subscriptions, and Declarations of Conformity before our Ordinary and Repetition of them



in the Church before our Congregations; and likewise by our Declarations of Assent and Consent, as prescribed in the Act of Uniformity. I say, we have in all these several Ways tied ourselves down to a regular, constant, conscientious Performance of all, and every thing, prescribed in, and by, the Book of Common-Prayer, according to the Usage of the CHURCH of ENGLAND. And seeing it has been the Wisdom of our CHURCH to lay us under these Engagements, in order to preserve exact Uniformity in public Worship, and all the liturgic Offices: Nay, since it has been judged proper to carry us through a Train of these Stipulations, before we can get Possession of any Benefice, and to make us renew them again, and again, as often as we change our Preferment, or obtain any new Promotion; and seeing that we have entred (as we have professed)



professed) *Ex Animo* into this Covenant with the Church, and have deliberately renewed it as often as there has been Occasion: How *frivolous* is it for any of us to say, that the Connivance, or the presumed Consent of our Ordinary, or the private Conveniencies of ourselves, or Families, or the obliging of any of our Parishioners, or the apparent Inexpediency of adhering to the Letter in some few Cases, will dissolve our Obligations to Conformity? Why, surely, we must know, that these, and the like Allegations are quite out of the Case; that, however, our Church-Governors may dispense with our Breaches of Rubric, however our People may acquiesce in them, or approve of them, yet that the Question is how far *we* are at Liberty to dispense with *ourselves* on Account of the forementioned Engagements, to which God, and the Church are made

Witnesses in as solemn a Manner, as they are to our personal Stipulations at Confirmation, or Matrimony; or whether we have not in this Case precluded ourselves from all Benefit of such Exemption, or Dispensation, as might perhaps be reasonably alledged in several other merely statutable, or canonical Matters. 11

I WELL remember, Sir, you put very great Stress on the *Connivance* of the Ordinary at some particular Deviations from Rubrics, &c. and insisted on its being a *sufficient* (though *tacit*) Dispensation for such occasional Liberties,—but hope, you cannot—now avoid seeing *so great* a Mistake. And Dr. *Sharp* will further inform you, that though the Ordinary may *connive* at a customary Neglect, yet he cannot *warrant* nor *excuse* the Minister in it, because *he* is bound by *prior* Obligations of Conformity to obey the  
CHURCH

CHURCH in what she commands in her Rubrics. And in all Points, where the Rubrics are plain and exprefs, the Ordinary has *no* Authority to release us from that Obedience, as appears from the *Preface concerning the Service of the CHURCH*, at the Beginning of the Prayer-Book. In which, though the Ordinary is allowed to interpret, and determine the Sense of the Rubric for us in all *doubtful* Cafes, yet it is with *this* Proviso, that he *shall not* order, or determine any Thing, *that is contrary to what is contained in the Service-Book* : That is, in Points that are clearly expreffed ; the Ordinary is as much prohibited from making Innovations, as the meanest parochial Minister among us. ))

THIS excellent, decisive Writer, you will observe, takes notice above of some *very peculiar Circumstances* of Obligation,  
Clergy-

Clergymen are under to obey Rubrics; and one is their Vow at the Altar for the Order of Priesthood. Now the Solemnity of this Transaction obliges me to be a little more parricular in shewing the *several* Parts of it.

THE Bishop at the Close of a most pathetic Exhortation says: — *And now that the present Congregation of Christ here assembled may all understand your Minds, and Wills in these Things; and that this your Promise may the more move you to do your Duties, ye shall answer plainly to these Things, which we, in the Name of God, shall demand of you touching the same,*

WILL you then give your faithful Diligence always *so* to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this CHURCH and REALM hath  
received



received the same, according to the Commandments of God; so that you may teach the People committed to your Care and Charge with all Diligence to keep, and observe them.

### A N S W E R,

I WILL do so by the Help of the Lord\*.

Dr. *Comber's* Note must not be here omitted, which is:— We have accurately prescribed Forms for all our Ministrations; from which, if any Minister might vary, and follow his own Fancy, it would breed infinite Confusion, and endless Scandals. Wherefore after the Example of our pious Ancestors, we oblige all the Clergy to minister

\* Promise unto the Lord your God, and *keep* it all ye, that are round about him.

minister the Word, and Sacraments; yea, and Discipline also in *one uniform Manner*: Which our Priests may safely promise to do, because this CHURCH hath taken such exact Care to come as near as possible to Holy Scripture in all those Particulars: So that for any Minister to come short of, or go beyond, *this present Constitution*, argues intolerable Pride and Folly, and discovers *such* a Presumption, as admits of no Excuse, especially after he has solemnly promised before God, and many Witnesses, that he will administer all these according to the Rules of the Church \*.

You

\* ALL Clergymen, in the Prayer for the State of Christ's Church militant here on Earth, beseech God to give *Grace to all Bishops and Curates, rightly and duly to administer his Holy Sacraments*. And none should by *undue* Administrations defeat their own Prayers.

You see, Sir, how bad and hateful a *Light Innovators* were looked upon in. And I must tell you, the *Practice* you would *promote*, *used* to appear to the Governors of the CHURCH in so *ghastly* a Shape, that they endeavoured to pursue and abolish it even by a particular Article of Inquiry after it at their Visitations.

I HAVE several Books of Articles before me.—And in one I find the following Interrogatory: Have any Children been baptised in Private, (except upon great Necessity, and if so, *what* was the same)? And have *all* Children, which were privately baptised, if they lived, been after-wards brought to your CHURCH, that the Congregation might be certified, whether they were lawfully baptised or no? In another: Doth your Minister, in the Administration of the Sacraments, use the *respective* Forms in the Book of Common-

mon-Prayer, which are enjoined in the  
CHURCH?

IN the Articles of Inquiry exhibited to the Ministers, &c. at a Metropolitcal Visitation throughout the Diocese of *Lincoln*, we have this Interrogatory. Doth your Minister *delay* the Baptism of any Infant, that is in Danger of Death, or baptise them in *any other Place*, than the CHURCH, when there is no such Danger? And when they are (in case of Necessity) thus privately baptised, doth he cause them afterwards, if they live, to be brought into the CHURCH, and certify the Congregation of the *Form* of Baptism used in private, and proceed thereupon in all Points, as in the Office for Private Baptism is directed?

A FOURTH Ordinary inquires, if there are any Parishioners (who profess to live  
in



in the Communion of the CHURCH of ENGLAND) that *refuse* to send their Infant Children to be baptised publicly in the CHURCH, unless in case of great Danger; or do they send them to be baptised in *any other* Parish? It should have been asked too, whether they did not send for the Minister, or Curate of *another* Parish to baptise their Children at Home, when *their own* Minister *refused* to do it?

You told me, Sir, you *would* try this Expedient, and *did*; and with Success most amazing,—perhaps even to yourself\*.

*Pudet hæc opprobria nobis;*

*Et dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli.*

BUT

\* Events, so hard to be accounted for, make me recollect and take notice at this Place, that some Years ago (and *other* Instances of the like kind have been heard

BUT you will give me leave to look  
a little further into Visitation-Enquiries,  
And

heard of *since*) a Discovery was made, by Letters found in a Gentleman's Scrutoir, who shot himself, of some very extraordinary Deistical Schemes framed plainly to disgrace the CHURCH of ENGLAND, and undermine the Christian Religion.

One, or more of the Projectors were actually got into Orders; and another had advanced so far towards it, as to offer himself for Examination, but happened to be disappointed. He was taken in the crafty Wiliness, that he had imagined. The Letters in his own Hand-writing (discovered as just said, and produced before his Face) were full Witnesses against him.

They (no doubt) appeared also to him, like the Hand-writing on the Wall to *another* Monster, and loosed the very Joints of his Loins, and made his Knees smite one against another.

Dr. *Nichols* (in his Defence of the CHURCH of ENGLAND) mentions a vile Contrivance (hatched by a Puritan) to bring our Liturgy into Disrepute; it may be of some Service to add it. " Those Ministers of the  
" Separation, who had no Benefices, kept Conven-  
" ticles either in private Houses, or in the Field.  
" Others, who were Parish-Ministers, reserved the  
" Office of *Preaching* to *themselves*; but for reading  
the

And that great Ornament of the *English* CHURCH Bishop *Bull*, in his Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of *St. David's* says thus : — Another and main Part of the Priest's Office is the Administration of the Holy Sacraments ; First, for Baptism ; the CHURCH strictly requires, that it be performed publicly in the House of God, not in private Houses, except in Cases of real Necessity ; as when a Child is weak, and cannot with-

“ the Common-Prayer, they hired some *ferry* Person  
 “ out of the *meanest* of the Laity to perform it. Mr.  
 “ *Snop*, a Minister of *Warwick*, a great Puritan of  
 “ that Time, did transgress all Rules of Modesty  
 “ in this Particular, and hired a *lame, old Soldier* to  
 “ be his Reader.”

Thus disguised Batteries have been *continually* kept playing upon us. And (surely) such subtle Inventions must necessarily put every, sound true-hearted Clergyman on his Guard, and make him hugely afraid of all *such* Constructions as may arise from a lifeless, negligent Habit of performing Divine Service, and indeed from *every Thing*, that may appear to be *irregular* in his Ministrations.

C

out

out endangering itself be brought to CHURCH. But notwithstanding this strict Order of our CHURCH, in most Places in *this* Country, Baptism is altogether administered in private Houses, and scarce any (if any) baptised in the CHURCH. If *this* may be allowed, away with the FONTS in your CHURCHES,—what do they signify? To what purpose are they there? If all the Authority, I am invested with, can do it, I will see this lamentable Abuse of the Sacrament reformed. ))

THE Author of the Penitential Discipline of the primitive CHURCH (supposed to be Dr. *Marshall*) says, pag. 232, “ That if the *Seasons* for Baptism “ were still preserved, out of which it “ should not (ordinarily) be lawful to “ administer that solemn Ordinance, the “ Office would appear the more venerable,



“ rable, when Numbers should contri-  
 “ bute to heighten the Sense of its Im-  
 “ portance, and Dignity. It would  
 “ not be the least Convenience at-  
 “ tending such a Regulation, that the  
 “ present (*scandalous*) Practice of *Private*  
 “ *Baptisms* would entirely be removed  
 “ by it, whenever there should be no Plea  
 “ of Sickneſs or Danger to excuse or en-  
 “ force it. And *there* it ſhould be in the  
 “ ſtricteſt *Senſe* private. Nor ſhould we  
 “ *then* appear ſo much as *now* we do, to  
 “ be aſhamed of our Religion, and of  
 “ *profeſſing before Men*, what Maſter  
 “ we belong to. Nor would the *Mid-*  
 “ *wife then* vye Offices with the *Prieſt*,  
 “ who *ſeem*, according to *modern* Eſti-  
 “ mation to be of *equal Account* in theſe  
 “ domestic *Solemnnities*; where the *giving*  
 “ *a Name*, paſſes with many for the main  
 “ Deſign of the Ceremonial.”

BISHOP *Smalldridge* adjures his Clergy (in order to preserve an *unfollied* Character) to approve themselves, TRUE and GENUINE Sons of the CHURCH of ENGLAND by a *fteady Adherence* to its Doctrines, a *devout* Celebration of its Worſhip, and a *ftriſt* Conformity to its Rules, Orders, and Diſcipline.

WHEN it is by our Eccleſiaſtical Laws provided, that there ſhall be a FONT of Stone in every CHURCH for the more decent Adminiſtration of Baptiſm, &c. &c. &c. Plain it is, (ſays his Lordſhip) and by the Framers of theſe Laws plainly declared, that in all ſacred Offices, and by all ſacred Perſons, a great Regard ought to be had to Decency.

A NOTION too commonly prevails of inſuperable Difficulties attending a ſtriſt Conformity to the Eccleſiaſtical Laws,

Laws, in our present Circumstances: Wherefore I have endeavoured (says Mr. Archdeacon *Sharp*) in every Instance of our Obligations, either from *Rubric*, or *Canons* to obviate this Objection, and reconcile *Law* with *Practice*, by shewing how our *Conduct* may be adjusted to our *Rule*, and rendered uniform and irreproachable in itself, as well as consistent with, and agreeable to those Laws, by which it is to be regulated.

HE speaks of *Customs* that have prevailed in some populous Towns, &c. repugnant to the Ecclesiastical Laws; but had the Pleasure to say, the Case was otherwise within *his* Jurisdiction;—where, although some *Irregularities* had been occasionally committed, yet they were *always* condemned, as *Innovations* upon *Church-discipline*, and *unwarrantable*; and had never grown into an a-

C 3
vowed,

vowed, or customary Practice. A worthy Proof of *true* Regard, and Zeal for the Honour of Religion, the established CHURCH, and her excellent Services. And I have known a *long, obstinate, and general* Custom of baptising *at Home, intirely* banished out of a whole Diocese \* by *such* a vigilant Eye, and the *like* Spirit, and Resolution.

You

\* I wish the *same* could have been done in *another*, from whence the Infection comes into the Country. The Reverend Dr. *Adam Littleton* (so long ago) seemed very sensible of *the Quarter*, that ~~had Proceed-~~  
 ices arose from. And how worthily did he endeavour to stop the Sluice! Let us especially (says the excellent Man) who are placed near, and about the great Metropolis of the Nation, mind the Business of our Function, considering what great Advantages are afforded us, what sacred Courage is infused into us by the Authority, and Prudence of our Right Honourable, and Right Reverend Diocesan. ~~For~~  
~~this Bishop's Episcopalia~~, and withal remembering, that all other CHURCHES at a Distance, will take *their* Measures from *our* Example, from what they shall see put in Practice by us. So that, if we of  
 those

ecclesiastical



You used to tell me, Sir, that I was *too scrupulous*, and confined myself to *narrower* Limits than *other* People; but I hope, you now plainly discern the Necessity and important Reasons for our adhering to *Rules*. If we *did not*, there would be *no End* of Compliances, nor of the bad Effects of them. We may learn so much even from Mr. *Baxter*, (*fas est et ab hoste doceri*) who says in his *Cure of Church Divisions*,—the Pastors, who will preserve the CHURCHES, must not be so tender of preserving their Interest in their Parishioners, as to depart from sober Principles, and ways to please them.

these Places, who do, as it were, stand in the Van of the ENGLISH CHURCH, shall resolve unanimously to keep our Ground, like a stand of Pikes, the whole Nation will in some short time with ease be reduced into good order again. — The Conclusion of his Sermon preached at the Visitation of the Right Reverend *Henry* Lord Bishop of *London*. See another Extract from it at the End of this Letter.

THIS pleasing Men is not the way of Peace; it may prove a palliate Cure for present, but prepareth for after Troubles and Confusions. If you *will* please them, you must follow them on, except you repent; and then you might, at much cheaper Rates have forsook *them*, where they forsook the ways of Truth and Peace. ))

How exactly is this verified in the Case I am discussing? after a Minister has been frequently christening *at Home*, and his favourable Disposition to *such* Compliances pretty well known, he never wants for Solicitations. Fresh Indulgencies are *continually asked*, and he knows not how to stop his Hand, or where they will end. A Gentlewoman desires to be church'd at Home, and it *cannot*  
be

be refused\*. And when a Child has had Private Baptism, instead of its being brought afterwards to CHURCH, as the *Rubric* enjoins,

\* Methinks a Minister, who has any Regard for his Character, and considers the Honour of the Lord he serves, should disdain such a servile Compliance, and Submission, and abhor the betraying his Master's Dignity. And one would believe the Greatness of the Mercy should oblige every Woman readily to acknowledge it in the most proper Manner, and Place. And the Rubric says—*The Woman shall come to the CHURCH.* And here she can with due Propriety, and Decency, (and here only) repeat (as she is required to do) the excellent Psalm appointed for the Office, and (surely) with particular Pleasure, and Comfort, this Part of it;—*I will pay my Vows now in the Presence of all his People, in the Courts of the Lord's House, even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem, praise the Lord.* A pious, and very worthy Lady in this Neighbourhood, (whose Fortune was above 60,000 l.) would not accept of a Compliment made her by the Minister of the Parish,—but refused to be churched even in her Seat, as the usual Place was at the Communion Rails. Thither she would go (with the poorest Woman) and with Ardor, equal to the Solemnity of the Place, and Occasion, return Thanks to Him, that had delivered her Soul from Death, her Eyes from Tears, and her Feet from Falling.

*should have* joins the Minister even makes this gives way too. [Quere, if this be not depraving the *en a Note* Book of Common-Prayer.] He is prevailed on (*Horrendum dictu!*) to go Home, and finish the rest of the Service and Ceremony at Home. And there he certifies, that the Child had been already baptised by him; and there he receives it into the Congregation of Christ's Flock.

THERE are too many Instances \* of this sort; but tell them not in *Gath*,—publish them not in the Streets of *Askelon*.

I NEED not inform you, Sir, WHAT Ends all these *irregular* Things are done to

\* Those Rites, and Ceremonies of the CHURCH, which are the self same now, that they were, when holy and virtuous Men maintained them against profane and deriding Adversaries, *her own Children* have this Day in Derision.

HOOKE's ECCLES. Polity.



to serve. It is very evident that it is chiefly to gratify a little Vanity and Pride, that People affect on such Occasions.

I HAD *never* but *one* Suit before *yours*, of this kind,——and then I was wrote to by a Gentleman (your near Relation) *to come to his House and baptise his Child, and make some Difference betwixt People of Fashion, and the vulgar Sort.* He spoke out, and was not *ashamed* to give the *right* Reason for such Requests. And this is the *grand Source* of all the *undue* Compliances which are made. The notorious Violation of our Rubrics, &c. and the misusing of our holy Offices are entirely owing to it.

THERE are *no* Orders of the CHURCH (says Dr. *Wall*) that do come in Process of Time to be more grossly and  
univer-

universally abused, than *those*, that begin  
 first to be dispensed with for the State,  
 and Character of the Persons concerned  
 in them. This was first granted as a Pri-  
 vilege of Kings, or Kings Sons, as ap-  
 pears by the Decretals of *Clement* the  
 Vth, and by the Council of *Cologne*,  
 where it is ordained, that none, but  
*they* should be baptised at Home.  
 Afterward it came, I suppose, to be al-  
 lowed to Noblemen, and so to other rich  
 Men. And as every Body affects the  
 Name, and State of Gentility, they think  
 themselves hardly dealt with, if they be  
 accounted in this Matter inferior to *such*,  
 or *such* of their Neighbours. This and  
 many other Instances of the like Nature,  
 that might be given, should teach the  
 Clergy to take care how they make any  
 Beginning of breaking that Rule of Scrip-  
 ture given by St. *James*, against any Re-  
 spect of Persons to be shewn in CHURCH  
 Matters

Matters; for if you once begin, there is no Stop to be made afterwards. Therefore the Synod of *Aix* determined—  
*That no Curate, or other Priest should under Pain of Excommunication go to any House, not even of a Nobleman, to administer Baptism, except in Case of Necessity, and that no case should be taken to be of Necessity, but when the Child's Life is in Danger* \*.

BUT you can't, I think, want now to be acquainted, that we have *later and stronger* Ties, than *such* Decrees to bind us, and the *Laity* also to Rules of Discipline, Order, and Decency. I do not mean *Rubrics, &c. only*.—You seem to put no great Strefs upon *them*,—but I mean the *three Acts of Uniformity*, made in the Reigns of King *Edward VI.*  
 Queen

\* *Dr. Wall's History of Infant Baptism, Vol I. p. 230.*

Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *Charles II.*  
 And a very wise Man says,—*A threefold*  
*Cord is not quickly broken.* But as I have  
 reason to believe, though you know,  
 there *are such* Laws that you have not  
 looked much into them, I will copy a  
 Section or two of them for your Use.  
 And they will make a *Discovery*, that, I  
 dare say, will be quite *new* to you. You  
 will be soon convinced, that your *Vicar*  
 would have stood liable to have been  
*severely punished*, by *express Words* in these  
 very Statutes, for *complying* with your  
 Request, and *you yourself* no less so, for  
 having *procured* him to do it. This may  
 startle you a little, but (*Lex dormit, &*)  
 it will appear to be *Bella Vera*.



2, 3, *Edw. VI. cap. 1.*

*An Act for the Uniformity of  
Service, and Administration of  
the Sacraments throughout the  
Realm.*

“ **A**LL, and singular Ministers in  
“ any Cathedral, or Parish-  
“ Church, or other Place within this  
“ Realm of *England*, or other the King’s  
“ Dominions, shall from, and after the  
“ Feast of *Pentecost* next coming, be  
“ bounden to say, and use the Mattins,  
“ Even song, Celebration of the Lord’s  
“ Supper,—and Administration of each of  
“ the Sacraments, and all their common  
“ and open Prayer in such Order and  
“ Form as is mentioned in the same  
“ Book, (Book of Common-Prayer) and  
“ none

“ none other, or otherwise. And for  
 “ the first Offence shall lose and forfeit  
 “ one Year’s Profit of one spiritual Pro-  
 “ motion, and suffer six Months Impri-  
 “ sonment.

“ AND if any Person, or Persons what-  
 “ soever after the said Feast of *Pentecost*  
 “ next coming, shall *procure* any  
 “ Parson, Vicar, or other Minister in  
 “ any Cathedral, or Parish-Church,  
 “ or Chapel, or in any other Place to  
 “ sing, or say any common, or open  
 “ Prayer, or to minister any Sacrament  
 “ otherwise, or in any other manner,  
 “ than is mentioned in the said Book,  
 “ shall forfeit for the first Offence ten  
 “ Pounds.”

“ You see, Sir, all and singular Mini-  
 sters are bound by *this Act*, and the Pe-  
 nalties for the *same* Offences are still  
 severer

severer in that of Queen *Elizabeth*, *(not*  
to administer any Sacrament, otherwise,  
or in any other Manner than is men-  
tioned in the Common-Prayer Book.

+ The Minister forfeits one Year's Revenue  
of *all* his Preferments, and the Procurer  
£an hundred Marks. And is not using  
the Public Office of Baptism in an *House*  
(an Office, framed *only* for, and *appointed*  
to be, used in the CHURCH) admini-  
stering a Sacrament otherwise than  
mentioned in the Common- Prayer Book?

+ Should  
have been  
a Note

THIS must stand then for a most fla-  
grant Breach of the Statute. And your  
*procuring* a Minister to run counter to it  
is *as* notorious, and clearly subjects you  
to the Penalty of ten Pounds. And the  
Act empowers all, and singular Arch-  
bishops, and every of their Chancellors,  
&c. Archdeacons, and other Ordinaries  
to inquire in their Visitations after such

D

Offences,

Offences, and to punish the Offenders by Admonition, Excommunication, &c. Nay, they are in God's Name earnestly required, and charged to endeavour themselves to the uttermost of their Knowledges, that the due, and true Execution of the Act may be had throughout their Diocese and Charges, as they will answer before God for such Evils, and Plagues, wherewith Almighty God may justly punish his People for neglecting this good and wholesome Law.

ALL Ordinaries were therefore obliged to be very vigilant, and to frame several of their Visitation Inquiries exactly to the Acts of Uniformity. And by *certain* Interrogatories inserted in their Book of Articles, they plainly appear to have had a particular Case on the *irregular* Administration of Baptism, and thought the Admini-



Administrator, and the Person, who *procured* him for the Purpose, both *punishable* by *these very Acts*.

I HAVE already taken Notice of several Interrogatories I met with in such Books, and shall only add one more, that I reserved for this Place.

“ HATH any one in your Parish,  
 “ caused, procured, or maintained any  
 “ Minister to say any public Prayer, or  
 “ to administer the Sacrament of Baptism,  
 “ or of the Lord’s Supper otherwise,  
 “ or in any other Manner than is  
 “ mentioned in the Book of Common-  
 “ Prayer \*” ?

THIS Interrogatory, you are sensible, is drawn in the *very Words* of the Sta-

\* Vid. Bishop *Wren’s* Articles of Enquiry for the Diocese of *Ely*.

tute ; and its Business being to discover *such irregular* Things, as *you* did, would have taken strong hold of you.

SUCH Inquiries, indeed, are now rarely made. But the Acts of Uniformity remain in the *same* Force, and every Man that disobeys them is as liable to be punished now, as ever.—Though as to myself, Sir, I hope, I have fully convinced you by this plain Letter, that I am influenced by *other* Motives, than the *Fear of Punishment*, and that you had no Reason to be displeased with

*Your most humble Servant,*

5 0059

V I C A R *of* —.

INSCRIBED

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INSCRIBED to the

**M A N E S**

OF THE

**AUTHOR'S PATRON.**

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M A N E S





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A N  
E X T R A C T  
F R O M

*Dr. Adam Littleton's Visitation  
Sermon, on 1 St. John v. 8.*

“ I COME now to apply to you my  
“ Brethren of the *Clergy*, and my-  
“ self. It were well, if we *Ministers*,  
“ as these sacred Things (which our  
“ Office and Function obliges us to be  
“ conversant about) are in *Unum*; so  
“ we ourselves would act in *Unum*, and  
“ agree in one in our Ministration of  
“ them.

It

" It is not the Unity of the Doc-  
 " trine only (wherein I hope we do  
 " all perfectly agree) but it is the Uni-  
 " formity of Administration also which  
 " must preserve the Church of God a-  
 " mongst us in her due Reverence.

" I MUST confess, we are borne down  
 " with evil Customs, both in one, and  
 " the other *Sacrament*; but 'tis high  
 " Time such evil Customs should be  
 " checked by Authority, and amended  
 " by our Diligence in our several Sta-  
 " tions.

" It is grown a Fashion now, because  
 " People of Fashion have used it, to  
 " have Baptism administered in their pri-  
 " vate Houses, contrary to the *very De-*  
 " *sign* of the Ordinance itself, which was  
 " appointed for the receiving of Infants  
 " into the Congregation, and incorporat-  
 " ing

“ ing them into Christ’s Body, the  
“ CHURCH.

“ Now what a Solecism is this, to pre-  
tend the doing of it *any where else* than  
in the CHURCH: 2

“ I AM sorry to hear what Objections  
“ are made, that the People will have it  
“ so; and that the Minister’s Subsistence  
“ does somewhat depend upon it. Why!  
“ Brethren, are we to be Men-pleasers?  
“ Are we to study filthy Gain? If it be  
“ so, that we *must* warp from our En-  
“ gagements, and *do* unlawful Things,  
“ because the People will have it so,  
“ that the *English* Clergy lie under that  
“ Necessity, that we *must* for the bet-  
“ tering of our Subsistence make irre-  
“ regular Compliances, what *shall* I say,  
“ Brethren?

“ *Salva, Domine, perimus!*”

*An*

*An Extract from the very ingenious Mr. Ridley's Sermon, preached at the Funeral of the Reverend Dr. William Berri-*  
man.

**M**R. Ridley taking Notice of the Doctor's singular Care in discharging his Pastoral Duty, remarks particularly,—That in administering the holy Sacraments he was punctual and exact,—in Baptism, not mixing the Water of Grace with the Cups of Intemperance, or blending Christian Sacraments with *Bacchanalian* Rites; but making the CHURCH the Place of ingrafting into the Congregation, and the Hours of Prayer the customary Seasons of it.



He then subjoins the following Note.

“ ALTHOUGH for these Reasons he  
 “ (Dr. B.) recommended the usual  
 “ Hours of Prayer, yet in Indulgence  
 “ to particular Cases, such as any great  
 “ Inconveniencies of Sureties attending  
 “ at that Hour, or Danger apprehended  
 “ to the Child in cold Winter Evenings,  
 “ he was ready to perform the Office  
 “ at any time of the Day. But then  
 “ used the whole Church Service, and  
 “ had the Bell rung a considerable Time  
 “ before, that a Congregation might  
 “ come in to join in the Prayers.”

As Dr. *Berriman*'s great Learning and  
 Piety will ever make his Memory dear  
 to the Christian World, *his* Judgment,  
 and Practice with regard to public Bap-  
 tism

tism must bear so much the greater  
Weight towards recovering the regular  
and decent Use of it in all other  
Parishes.

**F I N I S.**



1917